

Summer 6-15-2000

# ENG 5005-001: Historical and Literary Overview 18th-19th Cent.

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## Romantic Novel: Backgrounds & Contexts

English 5005  
Summer 2000



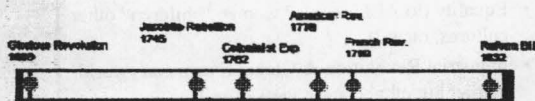
"Bonaparte  
Crossing the  
Saint-  
Bernard"  
-- David, 1800



## Backgrounds & Contexts

- Historical Overview (1688-1832)
- French Revolution & Impact on England
- History of the Novel -- Questions & Controversies

## Part 1: Historical Overview -- A Brief Glance (1688-1832)



## 1688 – Glorious Revolution (Origins of Modern GB)

- William and Mary, 1688-1702
- Parliament; Bill of Rights (how GB is organized today)
- Overthrow of James II because of his Catholicism & Absolutist ideas about Monarch

### 1702 – Queen Anne

- National Debt (1693)
- Bank of England (1694)
- Lloyds of London (1688)

### 1714 – King George I (House of Hannover)

- Act of Union (1707 Scotland)
- Jacobite Rebellion (1715 & 1745; “Pretender”)

### 1762 – Height of Colonialism

- East India Company
- Steam Engine & Other Mechanical Engines (1769-1780s)
- Effects on Trade, Global Expansion

### REVOLUTIONS !!!

- 1776 – American Revolution (George III)
- 1789 – French Revolution (Louis XVI & Marie Antoinette executed 1793)
- Liberty, Equality, Fraternity

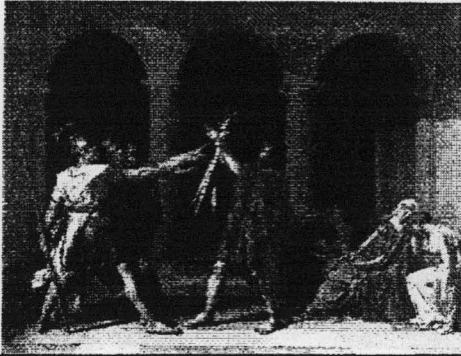
### Monarch? or Democracy?

- 1811 – “Regency Period” (George III declared insane; Prince Regent takes over)
- 1819 – Peterloo
- 1832 – Reform Bill Passes (wide-sweeping parliamentary reform; voting rights)

### So What???

- “Rights” (Bill of Rights, Civil Rights, entitlements)
- Constitutional Debate (who controls? to what extent? rationale behind?)
- Equality (to ALL people? women? children? other cultures, races?)
- Industrial Revolution & Global Expansion (world market but ethnocentric view of self?)
- Rise of Middle Class, Professional Class, & Reading Public (literacy extends & complicates the debate)

- David, "Oath of the Horatii"



### "Oath of Horatii" --

- Connects moral themes of domestic virtues (sensibility) to martial and patriotic themes of duty to state
- Stunning articulation of the heroic and tragic
- "Duty" (loyalty to father & state) is an emotional, double-edged sword
- Prior to Fr. Rev., state defined as and by monarch; divine right

### Some Important Words -- Used for first time or acquired new meanings

- democracy
- industry
- class
- art
- culture

### New "Social Matrix" or Public Sphere

- changing relationship between writer and readers
- changing idea of what "public" is
- production of art as specialized form (histories of)
- new idea that "art" holds superior reality, seat of "imaginative truths"
- increased interest in states of mind (pre-Freudian ways); alternate perspectives
- new idea that artist is an independent creative writer (potential for; career of)

### Part 2: Historical Overview -- French Revolution & Impact on England

- 1789 – Fall of Bastille
- 1790 – Constitution (iconoclastic changes; establish "new" history based on classical Rome)

### From Revolution or Terror? Reform or Chaos?

- 1793 – Execution of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette
- 1793-94 – Reign of Terror (Robespierre; later executed)
- 1799 – Napoleon elected First Consul (later Emperor)

### Napoleon ....

- 1799 – Napoleon Comes to Power
  - marks end of Revolution. beginning of Napoleonic Wars
  - world wide conquest
- 1814 – Defeat of Napoleon (exiled; later returns for “100 Days”)
- 1815 – Waterloo
- 1814-15 – Congress of Vienna

### Impact on England

- Disinterest or early support for Revolution (Corresponding Societies)
- Increasing distrust (by British Govt. of principles of Revolution)
- 1793 – War with France (“sympathy” for France ruled as “seditious”)
- Became known as “Revolutionary Debate”
- This Debate had tremendous influence on intellectual/literary work over next several decades

### “Revolutionary Debate” -- Crossfire 1790’s Style

- 1789 – Richard Price, “Discourse on the Love of Country”
  - Challenges Glorious Revolution of 1688
  - “Citizens” of world: need to change social order for better
  - Appeal to Reason. Equality (for all people)
- 1790 – Edmund Burke, Reflections on the Revolution in France
  - Predicts that Fr. Rev. will go bad
  - Analogy of Country to Family --Need for Honor, Hierarchy, Respect

### Burke, cont’d

- “But the age of chivalry is gone. That of sophisters, economists, and calculators, has succeeded; and the glory of Europe is extinguished for ever. Never, never more shall we behold that generous loyalty to rank and sex, that proud submission, that dignified obedience, that subordination of heart, which kept alive, even in servitude itself, the spirit of an exalted freedom. . . . But now all is to be changed. All the pleasing illusions, which made power gentle, and obedience liberal, which harmonized the different shades of life . . . are to be dissolved by this new conquering empire of light and reason.”

### Burke, cont’d

- Defends the need for Tradition for Stability
  - “I flatter myself that I love a manly, moral, regulated liberty . . . But I cannot stand forward, and give praise or blame to any thing which relates to human actions, and human concerns on a simple view of the object, as it stands stripped of every relation . . . . Circumstances . . . give in reality to every political principle its distinguishing colour”
- Can learn from history

### But on the other hand . . .

- 1792 – Thomas Paine, Rights of Man
  - History is Bunk.
  - Tradition is dead.
  - Preceding generations cannot & should not control present



### Paine, cont'd

- "There never did, there never will, and there never can exist a parliament, or any description of men, or any generation of men, in any country, possessed of the right or the power of binding and controlling posterity to the 'end of time.' . . . Every age and generation must be free to act for itself, in all cases, as the ages and generations which preceded it."

### Paine, cont'd

- Revolution and Bill of Rights of 1688 were correct for the time period
- Present generation should do what it believes is correct and compelled to do
- He calls this the "Rights of the living"
- Rationale: circumstances and people change (as opposed to a "political Adam" proposed by Burke)

### "Rights of Man," as in All People?? Or Just White Males???

- 1792 – Mary Wollstonecraft, Vindication of the Rights of Woman
  - Argues for female emancipation
  - Appeal to Reason as Genderless: Perfectability of Mind
- "My own sex, I hope, will excuse me, if I treat them like rational creatures, instead of flattering their fascinating graces, and viewing them as if they were in a state of perpetual childhood, unable to stand alone."

### Wollstonecraft, cont'd

- Critiques current social system and institutions (e.g., education and marriage)
- Create stupid, vapid women – of course!
- Then lays out plan for more challenging, more equal education system for women
  - "Reason is, consequently, the simple power of improvement; or, more properly speaking, of discerning truth. Every individual is in this respect a world in itself."

### Part 3: History of the Novel -- Questions & Controversies

- Origins of the Novel
- Development of the Novel
- Theories about Novel as Genre, as Narrative

### Origins of the Novel

- Controversy for several decades
- Likely origins in autobiographies (memoirs, spiritual), morality & conduct literature, travel literature, picaresque tradition, folktales
- Great deal of interest in last two decades to broaden our understanding of early forms of novel (cultural studies, marxist studies, New Historicism)

### Traditional Literary History has Skewed the History of the Novel

- Ian Watt, The Rise of the Novel (1957)
  - Important Contributions in regard to “realism” of novel and to make serious argument for Defoe as novelist
  - But overly simplified the “history” (the Big 5 and then Austen and then wait until Dickens in mid 19th century)
  - And somewhat distorted the idea of history through the metaphor of “development” (e.g., rise of novel suggests an evolutionary idea, growing)

### The Big 5 !! & Austen

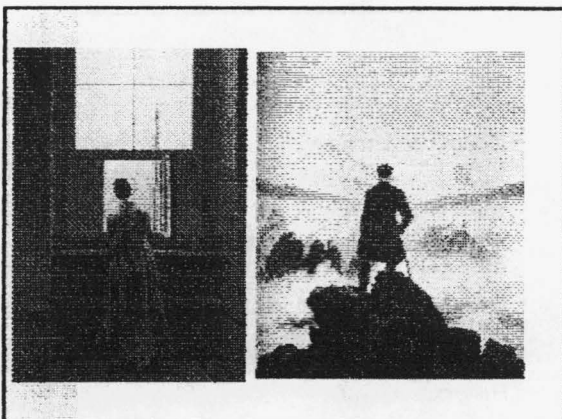
- Daniel Defoe, Robinson Crusoe (1719); Moll Flanders (1722)
- Samuel Richardson, Pamela (1740), Clarissa (1747-48)
- Henry Fielding, Shamela (1741), Joseph Andrews (1742), Tom Jones (1749)
- Laurence Sterne, Tristram Shandy (1760-67)
- Tobias Smollett, Humphrey Clinker (1771)
- Jane Austen, Sense and Sensibility (1811)

### Origins of Novel, cont'd

- Michael McKeon, The Origins of the English Novel (1987) and Margaret Doody, The True Story of the Novel (1996)
  - Challenged Watt by arguing that novel does not begin with Defoe in the 18th Cent.
  - Not of English origin either
  - Very rich, deep history in the orality of people and cultures --the need to tell stories and the use of such stories for domestic and public purposes

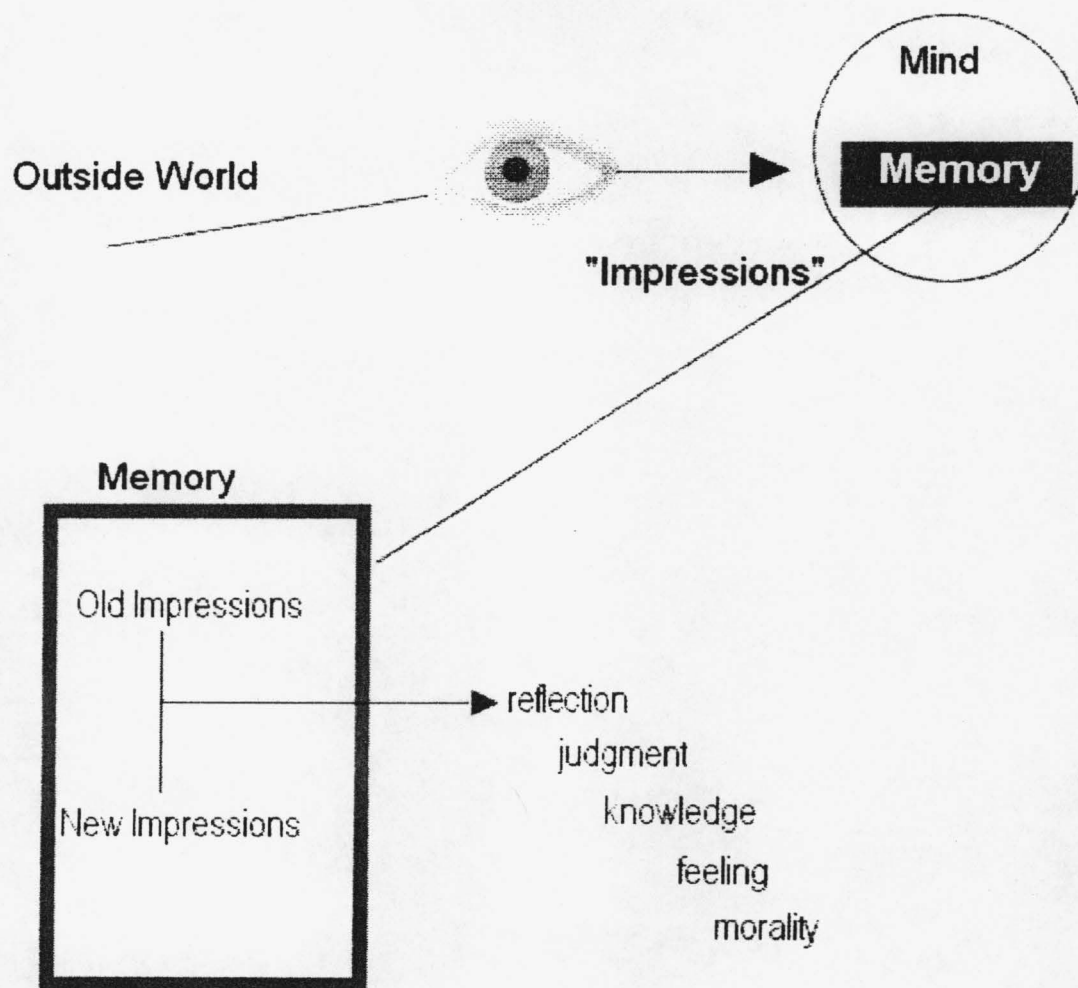
### The Novel of the 1790s; or “The Novel and the War of Ideas”

- Enlightenment
- Sentimentalism
- Anti-Sentimentalism
- Jacobins
- Anti-Jacobins



## Where the "organic" eye leads us . . . .

**tabula rasa** -- blank slate; knowledge can only come through experience



next



English 5005  
Romantic Novel  
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Report Schedule

- June 20:     Carnivals & Masquerades (*Simple Story*)
- June 26:     Marriage & Divorce (*Wrongs of Woman*)
- June 27:     The Unfinished Nature of the Novel (*Wrongs of Woman*)
- June 28:     Money & Employment for Women (VOP)
- June 29:     Proper Conduct; Themes of Seduction (VOP)
- July 3:       Circulating Libraries (*Northanger Abbey*)
- July 5:       Romance vs. Reality (NA)
- July 6:       Types of Gothic (*The Monk*)
- July 10:      Readings of *The Monk*
- July 13:      Marriage Plot & Class (*Pride and Prejudice*)
- July 17:      \*\* Aesthetics & Sensibility (*Pride and Prejudice*)
- July 18:      Knowledge & Science (*Frankenstein*)
- July 19:      Readings of *Frankenstein*

**Reading for Monday, June 19**

All readings are from *British Literature, 1780-1830* (eds. Mellor & Matlak)

- ◆ Wollstonecraft, 366-69; 371-90; 396-98
- ◆ "French Revolution & Rights of Man," 9-12
- ◆ Burke, 13-19
- ◆ Paine, 25-28